



Master Gardener Update February 2020

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Pollinator Project: Trees for Bees

Eastern Redbud

Cercis canadensis



Ouick Facts: Hardiness Zone: 4-9 Mature Height: 20-30' Spread: 25 – 35' Growth Rate: Rapid - 13 to 24" per year Sun: Full sun to light shade **Soil:** Prefers moist soils. Adapts to a range of types, but must be well drained. Bloom Time: Late April to early May Flowers: A heavy bloomer with highly ornamental purplish-pink pea shaped blossoms. The small flowers appear in clusters of 4-8 directly on branches and trunks. Flowers emerge before the foliage opens. The floral display lasts 2 to 3 weeks. **Foliage:** Leaves are heart-shaped and range from 2 to 3" wide by 5 to 6" long (depending on the cultivar) and are alternate on the branches. Spring leaves emerge bright green then mature to a dark green. Fall color is deep or bright yellow to yellow green. continues

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Websites

For Rock County MGV info:

rock.extension.wisc.edu/ upcoming-events-andvolunteer-opportunities/ OR fyi.extension.wisc.edu/ mgvrockco/rock-prairieassociation/

MGV Hours Reporting: wimastergardener.org/ report-your-hours/

RPMGA Blog: rpmga.blogspot.com

RPMGA on Facebook: Hit control/click on this link: RPMGA on Facebook

Rotary Gardens: rotarybotanicalgardens. org

Wisconsin Master Gardener Program: wimastergardener.org

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA): wimga.org







The redbud is most noted for its stunning spring floral display which begins in early spring before the leaves appear. Although most redbuds have a rose-pink display, others have white, deep magenta or light pink. The trunk commonly divides close to the ground which creates an interesting multi-trunk shape with graceful arched branches and a rounded crown.

Eastern redbud can be found throughout most of the eastern United States, extending as far west as Oklahoma and Texas and northward into Canada. It functions best as an understory tree and is particularly effective as a specimen or when planted in small groups. The horizontal branching pattern adds architectural interest to the garden and makes

an attractive canopy for spring bulbs.

Because of their early start and long bloom time, they can provide pollinators with much needed food in the early spring, when there isn't much else available.

Growth habit:

Quick Facts, cont.

Fruit: As the season progresses the tree will put on 2 to 3" long flattened pods which emerge green then turn brown as they mature. The crop can be moderate to heavy.

Diseases and infestations:

Canker can be a significant issue. Verticillium wilt, leaf spot, mildew, as well as blights. Insects such as Japanese beetle, leaf hoppers, caterpillars, borers, webworms and scale can present problems.

Grown as a single or multi-trunked small tree. Shape is rounded to flat topped with branching upright to spreading. The main trunk is generally short with branching close to the ground. Stems have a distinct zigzag growth pattern. Older branches may sometimes exhibit exfoliating bark with dark brown outer and orange-brown inner bark. They can be short lived.

continues



Fall color on redbud

Landscape uses:

Redbuds are best used as specimens or in small groups. Good for woodland borders, shrub borders, near pollinator or vegetable gardens or as a small landscape tree.

Habitat and cultivation:

This tree is best grown in moist, well-drained soil in full sun to partial shade. It tolerates acidic or alkaline soils as well as heavy clays, but it does not do well in wet or poorly drained soils. Plant in partial shade if you are located in an area with hot summers. Plant your tree in a protected area in zones 4 to 5 to help prevent winter dieback. Since it does not transplant well it is best planted as a young tree and left to mature undisturbed. Although there are many cultivars available, not all are equally hardy. For anyone planting in zone 5 or colder it is best to purchase from local sources as trees from other areas may not be sufficiently cold hardy.

Cultivars:

'Ace of Hearts' is a compact selection (to about 12 feet high) hardy in zones 5-9 with light violet flowers.

'Alba' has white flowers that bloom a little later than other cultivars of the species.

'Appalachian Red' has deep red purple buds that open to bright pink flowers.

'Columbus' or "Columbus Strain' is a selection collected near Columbus, WI that is hardier than the species, so is a useful seed strain for Midwestern and northern US areas.

'Wisconsin' or 'Wisconsin Strain' refers to this same selected population. 'Covey' (Lavender Twist[™]) is a weeping form, with stiff, contorted stems. 'Flame' has double rose pink flowers and seldom sets fruit. It is more erect than the species.

'Forest Pansy' has vivid reddish-purple leaves in early spring that change to dark green on the upper surface later in the season. It tends to bloom later than the species with darker colored, almost purple, flowers. This cultivar received the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit. Originally found as a seedling in 1947 at Forest Nursery, McMinnville, TN, information on its hardiness is somewhat conflicting.



Sources on Redbuds: University of Massachusetts Extension, University of Massachusetts Amherst, US Department of Agriculture, Eastern Redbud, Cercis Canadensis - A Horticulture Info article from the Wis. Master Gardener website, May 16, 2014, Susan Mahr, UW-Madison

RPMGA Events:

MGV Level 2 Training—You Help Choose the Topic! Thursday, February 6, 5:30-7:00 P.M.

On Thursday, Feb. 6 at 5:30 p.m., RPMGA will meet in the basement conference room at Premiere Bank for a Level 2 educational opportunity. There are currently six topics available on the UW-Madison, Division of Extension "Plants Plus" web page. We have not chosen which we will focus on - that will be at the discretion of those who come on the 6th.

The Level 2 programs are mostly combination of videos, additional readings and a simple short quiz. Whichever topic is chosen, we'll watch all (or most of) the associated videos on the 6th for 1 hour of continuing ed. You have the option of doing any additional videos or readings and the quiz on your own at home to qualify for an additional education hour. Hope to see you there!

The topics we'll choose from include:

- 1. Greener Gardens Reduce the time, water and energy needed to maintain your gardens. (For more information click here.)
- 2. Fragrance in the Garden (For more information click here.)
- 3. Pollinators (For more information click here.)
- 4. Cover Crops for the Garden (For more information click here.)
- 5. Vine Crops A celebration of cucumbers, melons and squash. (For more information click here.)
- 6. Square Foot Gardening A technique for making the most of your garden space. (For more information click here.)

Date: Thursday, February 6, 2020

Time: 5:30 -7:00 p.m.

Location: Premier Bank Community Room (basement), 1400 Black Bridge Road (Behind the Milton Ave. McDonalds)

From Greener Gardens -Photo by Jeff Epping.



Mary Kay Thompson

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RPMGA

2020 Meeting Topics

Last month we asked members to give us their input on what types of educational programs they'd like to see in 2020. Based on the most popular responses, we've put together a *tentative* calendar for the year, which you can see below. Indoor events will generally take place on the first Thursday of the month, at 5:30 in the evening. We'll usually aim for daytime on the first Thursday for outdoor events, but in either case that may change based on the availability of the speaker or tour host. So be sure to double-check the day, time and location for each meeting.

The biggest event we're trying to arrange is a bus trip to **Seed Savers Exchange** (seedsavers.org/visit) in northeast Iowa (Decorah) for late July or August. Since the trip itself is about 3.5 hours each way, we're planning an overnight, with at least two other fun garden-related stops. We're still working out the details, including the costs, but the bus holds 56 people and we hope to fill it. We'll likely open the trip to Master Gardeners from nearby counties, but if you have a spouse or gardening friend who would like to come, they'll be welcome.

January	February Level 2 MGV Training	March	April
Winter Houseplant Care	(topic chosen at meeting)	Mushrooms	Companion Planting*
May	June	July	August
Tour of Green Roofs in	UWW Prairie Walk	Tour of Boerner Botanical	Seed Savers Exchange Bus
Beloit	(Whitewater)	Garden (Milwaukee area)^	Trip^
September Tour of Welty	October	November	December or January 2021
Environmental Center	Soils*	Annual Potluck	Intro to Hydroponics*

^We are also hoping to arrange a tour of Agrecol's Native Plant Nursery's field operations in July or August.

*We are looking for a creditable expert to talk on this subject. If you know someone, please contact either Ruth Flescher (ya-fello2@gmail.com) or Mary Thompson (mastergardenermary@gmail.com).

MGV Events

Level 1 Training Begins in Elkhorn

Our Horticulture Outreach Specialist, Julie Hill, reports that the MGV Level 1 training class is full and includes a number of people from Rock County as well as Walworth County, so we have some new MGVs to greet and make welcome.

Classes are scheduled to run every *other* Thursday afternoon from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Most will take place at the courthouse on the square in Elkhorn, though several field trips are planned (including one to Rotary Gardens). The classes start on Feb. 6 and run through Aug. 20.

Current MGVs are welcome to attend any of the sessions. In addition to connecting with some of the new MGVs and learning about projects going on in Walworth and Rock Counties, the time qualifies for education hours. Here's what's being covered in February:

Feb 6: Introduction to the MG program, policies, syllabus, manual and more Feb 20: Good garden practices and Online Reporting System (ORS) training

Leap into Spring Gardening Workshop

This free event is getting close to full, but you may still be able to sign up. Counts for 3 education hours (CEUs).

The program will cover general gardening practices and strategies, with lots of information and resources. After the general program, you'll choose four breakout sessions. Options include container gardening, compost, soils, seed starting and garden methods for maximizing vegetable yields. It should be an excellent morning!

To register, call 262-472-3165 or click on this link: <u>uw-whitewater.leap-into-spring-gar-</u><u>dening</u>.



Updated Web Pages to Explore and Bookmark

As part of an effort to make it easier for you to find fun places to volunteer and interesting education opportunities, Horticulture Outreach Specialist Julie Hill is using these websites as a central clearinghouse for all such opportunities relating to Rock County. If you're looking for hours of either variety, check here. If you want to promote an opportunity of either kind, let Julie know and she'll include it.

Rock County pages: <u>https://rock.extension.wisc.edu/upcoming-events-and-volunteer-opportunities/</u> and <u>https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/mgvrockco/rock-prairie-association/</u>

Garden Expo



PBS Wisconsin's Garden & Landscape Expo is a midwinter oasis for people ready to venture out and dig their hands in the dirt. Now in its 27th year, this three-day event celebrates the latest trends in gardening and landscaping, and attracts more than 20,000 people from across the Midwest. Join other gardening enthusiasts to share ideas, gain inspiration and connect with professional landscapers. All proceeds support PBS Wisconsin. Here are things you can do at Garden Expo:

- Earn education hours at over 150 free educational seminars and stage demonstrations.
- Connect with dozens of landscaping professionals who can help deliver your landscape dream.
- Visit with hundreds of businesses, independent contractors, nonprofits and artists to share ideas and learn about the newest in gardening, landscaping and local foods.
- Discuss innovative gardening techniques with Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Horticulture experts.
- Relax with a casual walk through beautiful garden displays—courtesy of <u>Wisconsin Nursery & Landscape Association (WNLA)</u>.
- Purchase seeds, tools and everything else you need to be ready when the trees bud and the ground thaws.
- Cultivate a love for gardening and the outdoors with your entire family in <u>Nature Cat's Backyard</u>!
- Attend the Sunday farmers' market, featuring farmers, food artisans and local food retailers.

For more information, go to wigardenexpo.com



Registration is required to attend this event. \$69 for RBG Members • \$79 for Non-Members

The registration deadline is March 16, but tickets may sell out early. No refunds after March 16, 2020.

> To register, call 608.752.3885 or visit RotaryBotanicalGardens.org

The Speakers You May Not Know

Most of us know Mark Dwyer, but here's background on the other two speakers featured at Rotary's Spring Symposium:

Michael Jesiolowski is Director of Horticulture at Rotary Botanical Gardens. He has spent most of his career at public garden institutions, most recently as Garden Supervisor at Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, Missouri. At Chicago Botanic Garden, he was Senior Horticulturist. Michael received his formal training through the University of Illinois, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Horticulture. He also has experience working at The Morton Arboretum (Lisle, IL), Bernheim Arboretum (Clermont, KY), Epic Systems (Verona, WI), and the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

Bobbie Schwartz is a certified landscape designer. Her business focuses mostly on residential landscape design, consultation, installation and maintenance, plus lecturing and writing. Her landscape signature is the use of perennials, flowering shrubs and ornamental grasses for year-round color and interest. Bobbie has received several design awards. Since 1988, Bobbie has been lecturing locally and nationally on various aspects of design and perennial and ornamental grass gardening. She also writes extensively for various associations and magazines. Her book *Garden Renovation: Transform Your Yard into the Garden of Your Dreams*, was released in 2017.

Registrations forms are available on Rotary's website.

Winter Workshops by Mark Dwyer

at the UWW-Rock County Campus in Janesville. On Saturday, February 15, Mark will talk about landscape design basics, color combinations, and texture with maintenance in mind. The class will be held in Hyatt Smith 120, and will run from 8:40 to noon (3 CEUs or education hours). The campus is located at 2909 Kellog Avenue in Janesville. Registrations accepted until the day before the workshop unless sold out. Price is \$25. If you have questions or need more information contact Molly Cook (cookmj24@uww.edu), (608) 758-6549. To register, go to: https://uw-

whitewater.ungerboeck.com/prod/emc00/PublicSignIn.aspx?&SessionID=fakei8ei5eilfe8ei5&Lang=*

at Blackhawk Tech. Mark also has four upcoming workshops at Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville. Each one meets on both Tuesday and Thursday evening for two consecutive weeks. Classes run from 6-8:00 p.m. each night, for a total of 8 hours of CEUs. Price is \$31.80 per workshop set. February workshops include:

Wellness in the Garden. Feb 4 topic: Gardening for All Ages; Feb 6: Adapting the Garden; Feb 11: Appropriate Garden Tools & Tasks; and Feb 13: The Sensory Garden.

Garden Plants, Tried and True. Feb 18 topic: Trees and Shrubs; Feb 20: Perennials; Feb 25: Annuals & Bulbs; and Feb 27: Vegetables and Herbs.

For instructions on how to register, go to: <u>https://forms.blackhawk.edu/contedu/ or</u> <u>https://www.blackhawk.edu/Portals/0/PDFs/Programs%20%26%20Classes/Take%20a%20Class/CommunityEdSchedule.pdf</u>



At Basics Coop. Garden Inspiration Series public lectures from 6-7:30 p.m. in Basics' Community Room. No admission required, but \$5 donation to benefit Paddy's Paws is encouraged. On Feb 26, Mark will present Garden Ideas from Near and Far. You'll view a wide range of plants and planting combinations from visits to botanical gardens and private residences. Not only will this be an inspiring exposure to vivid color in the gardens but a wide range of applicable gardening ideas will be discussed as well. Reservations taken at <u>https://www.basicshealth.com/events-sign-up/garden-ideas-from-near-and-far</u>. Future topics will include Creating Effective Plant Combinations and Gardening with Children.

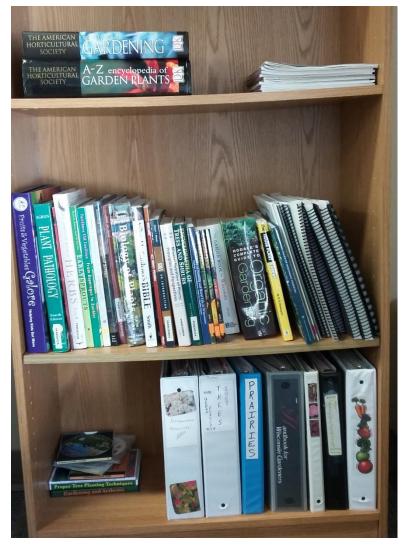
More Items of Interest

Did You Know We Have a Lending Library of Garden Books? Stop by the Rock County Extension office and check out the Master Gardener Lending Library. It's tucked in next to the couch, just to the right of the main entrance. As you can see here, there are titles from Master Gardener training, the American Horticultural Society, Rodale Press and many more. Check them out!

MG Plant Propagation Workshop run by the state MG program office at DC Smith Greenhouse at the UW-Madison. Saturday, March 21 from 8:30 to 3:30. The cost is \$40 and you'll come home with lots of new plant starts. There are only 18 spots available and it's open to MGVs from all across the state, so it fills up fast. To register, go to <u>https://uw.ungerboeck.com/prod/emc00/register.aspx?OrgCode=10&Ev-</u> <u>tID=24985&AppCode=REG&CC=120010793097®TYPE=3100-102</u> For more information and pre-class materials, see <u>https://wimastergardener.org/plantprop/</u>

Cultivating Connected Communities Allen Centennial Garden's Resilient Landscapes Symposium will be held this year on March 27 and 28 at the UW-Madison's Union South. For details on speakers, themes and registration, go to <u>https://uwmadison.eventsair.com/rls2020/</u>

Master Naturalist Training Similar to, but separate from the Master Gardener Program. There will be several training dates this year in Rock and Walworth Counties. Each host sets their own schedule, but all training includes 40 hours of lessons. Registration is now open for a location in Williams Bay (Walworth County) from July 27 to August 1. The fee is \$275. For more information, go to <u>wimasternaturalist.org</u> Welty Environmental Center near Beloit is hosting two options: July 13-19 or August 23 to October 11.



WIMGA 2020 Conference Master's at the Prairie will take place Friday and Saturday, September 11 and 12 in West Bend, WI. Keynote speakers include Chicago Botanical Garden's Lisa Hilgenburg and well-known WI garden expert Melinda Meyers. Registration materials should be ready by May and will be emailed to you.

Volunteer Opportunities: What Is RECAP?

Rock County Education and Criminal Addiction Program (RECAP) is a five month educational program designed for prisoners with crimes associated with addiction. The main goal is education: If you don't have your high school credentials, you will earn a GED or HSED. Blackhawk Technical School teachers offer reading, math, language, parenting, computer skills and employability classes. Sheriff's office staff teach anger management, restorative justice and thinking for change. A counselor is available and offers services throughout their stay.

A major component of the program is at least 85 hours of volunteer service. The mission is "To Give Back to Your Community." Participants perform a multitude of services throughout the county. Festivals, downtown clean-up projects, the 4-H Fair, local fund raisers and community service organizations benefit from the labor of this group. You may have seen them around, in their brown uniforms with RECAP printed on them, many wearing orange crocs, doing the hard work to make local events successful. Many of these volunteers are amazed at the support they are shown, the new things they learn along the way and the contacts they make while helping out. Many have been offered jobs!

The RECAP garden has a dedicated group of volunteers called Community Garden Outreach that bring the recappers to the garden and teach them as we work. Whatever the season, we have various tasks that need to be completed. We try to incorporate as much information as we can about what we are doing, why we do it and why this way, when to do it and how to do it. Questions are encouraged and participants are required to write what they learned each day on their time card. We also encourage healthy eating and get the helpers to try the garden items. The garden produce is utilized in CSA baskets and the rest is donated to local food pantries throughout the area.

The garden offers many volunteer opportunities. If you have not visited, a tour will help to see the scope of what goes on. We can use help with everything that happens at the garden. If you are interested in helping out you can reach Deb Grams at <u>debgrams@yahoo.com</u> Volunteers working with recappers will be required to read and sign the Sheriff's Office Volunteer agreement as well as attend PREA training. Opportunities are listed below:

Deb Grams

- * Bulletin Board-keep board updated with disease and pest information
- * Help with harvest, veggie clean up and CSA preparation
- * Adopt a raised bed or garden area to plant and maintain
- * Create an educational display or garden
- * Plant and maintain the pollinator area
- * Assist supervising recappers in garden tasks

February 2020 Education Calendar

For details on any of these education opportunities, search the web using the program title and/or organization name. Items in red type are put on for or by Rock County master gardeners.

NCG = Nicholas Conservatory Gardens, Rockford, IL; PBS = WI Public Television; BTC = Blackhawk Technical College, Janesville; RPMGA = Rock Prairie Master Gardener Association, Janesville; RCMG = Master Gardener Program for Rock County; UWA = UW Arboretum, Madison; HPL = Hedberg Public Library, Janesville; OBG = Olbrich Botanical Garden, Madison; UWW-J = UW-Whitewater, Janesville; WCMG = Winnebago County Master Gardeners, Oshkosh; ACG = Allen Centennial Garden, Madison; UIEX = University of Illinois Extension, Rockford, IL; WHPS = WI Hardy Plant Society, Madison; WEC = Welty Environmental Center, Beloit; DCUWEX = Dane County UW Extension, Madison; BC = Basics Coop, Janesville; UWW = UW in Whitewater; OCMG = Ozaukee County Master Gardeners, Cedarburg

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	In Full Bloom (Drchid Display Feb 11 t		1		
2 Plants on the Frontier PBS	3	4 Wellness in the Garden BTC/ Plants on the Frontier PBS	5	6 Level 2 MGV Training RPMGA/ MGV Level 1: Intro RCMG/ Wellness in the Garden BTC/ Managing Stormwater for Environmental Health UWA	7 Garden Expo PBS	8 Garden Expo PBS
9 Garden Expo PBS/ Winter Sampler Walk UWA	10	11 Winter Sowing HPL/ Wellness in the Garden BTC/ Edibles in Every Garden OBG	12	13 Wellness in the Garden BTC/Seed Starting: Attract- ing Butterflies and Humming- birds with Native Plants OBG/Arb- oretum Research Symposium UWA	14 Valentines Day	15 Basics of Land- scape Design UWW-J/Summer Dreams Seminar WCMG/ Mitigating Flood Risk Through Better Gardening ACG/Joys of Gardening UIEX

16	17	18	19	20	21	22
		Garden Plants -	Forty Years a	MGV Level 1		Envisioning a
		Tried and True	Gardener WHPS	Good Garden		Sustainable
		BTC/Grow Plants		Practices RCMG/		Agricultural Future
		with LED Lights		Garden Plants -		for WI ACG/Maple
		OBG		Tried and True		Sugar Fest WEC/
				BTC/Gardening		Madison Area
				for Hummingbirds		Woodland Owners
				UWA/Soil		Conference
				Webinars UIEX		DCUWEX
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
If Trees Could Talk	Orchids for	Garden Plants -	Garden Inspir-	Garden Plants -		Leap into Spring
Walk UWA	Beginners OBG/	Tried and True	ations from Near	Tried and True		Garden Workshop
	Stateline Fruit &	BTC	and Far BC	BTC/From		UWW/Inspired
	Vegetable			Military Facility to		Gardening Sym-
	Growers Con-			Greenspace UWA		posium OCMG
	ference UIEX					

Looking ahead to March

The following events occur early in March, but most require registration in February. Classes take place at Olbrich Botanical Gardens unless otherwise noted.

In Leopold's Footsteps Walk, UW Arboretum, Sunday March 1, 1-2:30 p.m. No registration required. Meet at the Visitor Center.

Behind-the-Scenes Spring Flower Show Set-Up, Monday, March 2, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Registration Deadline: February 21.

Hands-On Hydrangea Pruning Workshop, Sunday, March 8, 1-3 p.m. Registration Deadline February 27

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